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IAF's Rafale fighter jet flies past Rajpath, during the 72nd Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi on Tuesday | PTI

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India celebrates 72nd R-Day

Showcases military might, cultural heritage at Republic Day parade

RAFALE AIRCRAFT MAKES DEBUT ON R-DAY FLYPAST

Rafale fighter jets took part in the Republic Day flypast for the first time as the armed forces showcased its T-90 tanks, the Samvijay electronic warfare system and Sukhoi-30 MKI fighter jets on the 72nd Republic Day on Tuesday

17 tableaux
from states and Union Territories, nine from different Union ministries and paramilitary forces also took part in the parade

There were six tableaux of the defence ministry, including two by the Defence Research and Development Organisation

A FIRST ON MANY COUNTS

This year, attendance to the parade was limited due to the pandemic. Those below 15 years of age and above 65 were not allowed among the visitors at the venue

The contingents only marched a distance of 3.5 km instead of the usual 8.5 km and for the first time in 55 years

A 122-member contingent of the Bangladesh armed forces marched on Rajpath, carrying the legacy of legendary muktijoddhas, who fought and liberated the country in 1971

NO FOREIGN DIGNITARY ATTENDED THE JAN 26 PARADE

RAM TEMPLE REPLICA ON RAJPATH

Uttar Pradesh's tableau showcased the replica of Ayodhya's Ram temple

The bedecked tableau was fronted by a sitting model of Maharishi Valmiki and the temple model occupied a large portion on the rear side

ARMY, NAVY, AIR FORCE SHOWCASE THEIR STRENGTH

Army showcased its main battle tank T-90 Bhishma, infantry combat vehicle BMP-II-Sarath, mobile autonomous launcher of the BrahMos missile system, multi-barrel rocket system Pinaka, electronic warfare system Samvijay

The Navy's tableau at the Republic Day parade this year displayed models of INS Vikrant and naval operations that were conducted during the 1971 India-Pakistan war

The Air Force exhibited models of light combat aircraft Tejas and indigenously developed anti-tank guided missile Dhruvastra on its tableaus during the parade

SCALED-DOWN MODELS OF THE LIGHT COMBAT HELICOPTER, SUKHOI-30 MKI FIGHTER JET AND ROHINI RADAR WERE ALSO PART OF THE IAF TABLEAUX

A total of 38 IAF aircraft, include Rafale, and four planes of the Indian Army participated in the flypast

25,000
MAXIMUM SPECTATORS ALLOWED FOR THIS YEAR'S REPUBLIC DAY

The ceremony began with PM Narendra Modi laying a wreath at the National War Memorial. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, CDS Gen Bipin Rawat, Army chief Gen M M Naravane, Navy chief Admiral Karambir Singh and IAF chief Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhadauria were also present

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARWAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILUPPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Unprecedented violence in Delhi as thousands of people break barriers and take detours from their kisan tractor parade to enter the heart of the city, fight pitched battles with security forces; clamber up the historic Red Fort to fly their religious flag; one farmer dead, at least 86 police personnel injured

MOBS HIJACK TRACTOR PARADE

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

REPUBLIC Day that is marked by pomp and show in front of stately government edifices and seats of power turned into a day of anarchy when thousands of farmers entered the heart of Delhi much ahead of the agreed time and after deviating from pre-determined routes.

What was promised to be a peaceful tractor rally at agreed routes was anything but that as the protesters, who outnumbered the police in all the three routes, defied tear gassing and lathicharge. They breached barricades and clashed with the police at several locations.

By the end of the day, one farmer had died, an unspecified number of them injured and 86 police personnel were hurt, some of the critically, the police said.

The farmers riding tractors, SUVs and two-wheelers breached security cordons and barricades, entering Delhi before 12 noon, the agreed time for their rally. The first breach happened from the Singhu border in north Delhi, when farmers forced their way through. This was followed by protesters entering the city from Ghazipur in East Delhi.

Once in the city, the protesters clashed with the police first in ITO, central Delhi. They used their tractors to break the police barricades. Buses parked in the middle of the road to obstruct them were vandalised and it was here that Navneet Singh, a farmer driving a tractor died. While the police claimed he died as his tractor turned turtle, the farmers alleged that Navneet was killed in police firing. The protesters draped his body in Tricolor and sat in protest for several hours in the middle of the road.

The scene then shifted to the historic Red Fort, where both sides fought pitched battles. Hundreds of farmers reached its rampart and hoisted their flag where the Prime Minister, every Independence Day, hoists the national flag and addresses the nation.

"About 200 artists and kids who got stranded inside Red Fort were safely rescued. These artists came here for the Republic Day parade. The police first took them to a nearby hotel in Daryaganj to have food and then carefully rescued them to their destination," said DCP North Anto Alphonse.

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha, the umbrella organisation of all the 40 farm unions, distanced itself from the violence and blamed anti-social elements. Later in the evening it said they had called off the kisan rally and asked all the farmers to return to the borders.

Joginder Singh Ugrahan, the leader of the biggest farm union, accused actor-singer Deep Sidhu for the violence and the flag hoisting at Red Fort. Sidhu was part of the election campaign team of Sunny Deol, BJP member of Parliament from Gurdaspur in Punjab.

A leader of the morcha said it was the Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee that deviated from the agreed route. AIKS leader Hannan Mollah condemned the violence and said the farmers had been holding a peaceful agitation for the past several weeks. P7

Clockwise from left: Farmers gather at Red Fort on Tuesday; protesters clash with police near Mukarba Chowk; and an overturned tractor at ITO in central Delhi that killed its driver | PTI, SHEKHAR YADAV

Shocking scenes in Delhi. The violence by some elements is unacceptable. It'll negate goodwill generated by peacefully protesting farmers. Kisan leaders have disassociated themselves & suspended #TractorRally
Amarinder Singh, Punjab chief minister

We strongly condemn the violence seen in today's protest. It is regrettable that the Central government allowed the situation to deteriorate to such an extent
Aam Aadmi Party

Actor Deep Sidhu incited the youth to take over the agitation and give it a different colour. He damaged our agitation. We don't know who they are working for
Joginder Singh Ugrahan, BKU (Ugrahan) chief

THE REPUBLIC DAY SHOCKER

Delhi Police registers 4 first information reports

The Delhi Police registered four FIRs in connection with the violence. "Three FIRs were registered in east district and one in Shahdara district on Tuesday," a police official said

Paramilitary deployment

A meeting chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah decided to deploy additional paramilitary troops in the wake of the violence. Around 1,500 to 2,000 personnel could be deployed

Flagrant violation of terms for kisan rally

- Tractor rally was permitted to start only after official R-Day parade, but a section of the protesters jumped the gun
- Tractors violated the agreement on not carrying more than five persons
- No weapons were to be carried, another stipulation that was completely ignored
- Routes were clearly defined, but mobs took detours, violently confronting the police

INTERNET SERVICES SUSPENDED FOR 12 HOURS

The Centre suspended internet services in parts of Delhi, including Singhu, Ghazipur and Tikri and their adjoining areas, for 12 hours from Tuesday noon. Internet clampdown was also ordered in Haryana

Blow-by-blow account

8:30 am: Farmers begin tractor march at all three borders — Singhu, Tikri, Ghazipur — much before the agreed time of 12 noon; break barricades, try to push across cement dividers placed by Delhi Police

10.50 am: Mob forcibly tries to enter Outer Ring Road, clashes with police; policemen resort to caning, firing tear gas shells

11.30 am: Farmers from Ghazipur enter Delhi via Akshardham flyover; mob breaks barricades, cement blocks, central median; faces police batons and tear gas

1.30-2.00 pm: Hundreds of people reach Kashmeri Gate; break barricades, enter Red Fort and hoist Khalsa flag and national flag at the pole where the PM hoists the Tricolour every Independence Day

1.00-2.00 pm: Another group reaches ITO crossing; clashes break out between police and farmers; buses, police vehicles smashed by the mob; a farmer dies after his tractor turns turtle as it rams into a barricade

3.00 pm-5.00 pm: Farmers staged a sit-in protest demanding justice, martyr status, apology from Delhi Police for the farmer's death

4 pm: Farmers removed from Red Fort

4.30 pm: Home minister Amit Shah reviews situation with Home secretary & Delhi Police

6.30 pm: Farmers disperse from ITO

7.30 pm: Samyukta Kisan Morcha calls off march

'Terrorists stormed Red Fort'

SHREEPADA AYACHIT
@ Koppal/Bengaluru

AGRICULTURE Minister B C Patil on Tuesday stoked a controversy when he remarked that terrorists, and not farmers, had stormed the Red Fort in New Delhi. He even went on to allege that Congress workers and Pakistan-backed terrorists, in the guise of farmers, were responsible for storming of Red Fort.

The National Flag and the Red Fort have constitutional special and sanctity and their insult, especially on Republic Day, is a black spot on India's democratic history. It is highly condemnable and the guilty should be brought to book, he said after unfurling the National Flag at the 72nd Republic Day celebrations in Koppal. P4

Women atop a tractor take out a rally in Hubballi on Tuesday to show solidarity with farmers protesting in New Delhi | @HEMANTH

With fewer tractors, B'luru spared

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

ON a day Delhi witnessed clashes, the tractor rally by farmers in Bengaluru passed off without any incident. Despite a protest against the farm laws on Tuesday, there were no traffic snarls in the city, thanks to the coordinated efforts of the city police and the neighbouring districts. After a recent protest by the Congress in support of the farmers' protest had caused traffic gridlock in Majestic and surrounding areas, it was anticipated that the tractor rally will create a similar situation.

To prevent such a situation, the city police had held several rounds of talks with farmer leaders. A senior police officer said that soon after the farmers announced the protest, meetings were held with some leaders. "They were told tractors cannot be allowed and we cannot have thousands of tractors entering the city at once. They were requested to hold a peaceful rally without tractors. But they didn't agree," he said. P4

EXPRESS READ

Second sero-survey begins in Karnataka

Bengaluru: The Health and Family Welfare Department commenced the second serological survey across the 30 districts of the state as well as eight zones of Bengaluru on January 25 to assess the exposure of the population to Covid-19. The sero-survey will continue for the next 10 days. P3

'KEEP VIGIL'

No scope for complacency in Covid fight: Governor Vala

In his Republic Day address, Vajubhai Vala also appreciated the govt's efforts in fighting the pandemic and emphasised the need to follow the existing protocols | P2

SPREADING GROWTH

Companies looking at hybrid model with facilities outside Bengaluru

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

THE new normal in work culture is here and, in all likelihood, it will stay for at least some time to come. Looking ahead, companies are considering a hybrid-model with smaller operations outside the state capital while retaining their major operations in Bengaluru. Many firms are exploring co-working spaces in other cities and towns outside Bengaluru even as they await the task force report, which is expected next week.

This is in line with the government's push to take IT/BT firms to other cities and towns in the state as part of its strategy to decongest Bengaluru and develop other cities. Though past governments have been stressing on setting up IT companies outside Bengaluru, there has not been much success. The latest initiative by the Yediyurappa government — Beyond Bengaluru — which was launched in November 2020, focuses on building an innovation and technology ecosystem.

A senior official from the IT-BT Department told TNIE that after they launched 'Beyond Bengaluru', they are in talks with a few companies that have shown interest in the hybrid model — a blend of offline and online working. While some employees will work from offices with physical presence, others will work outside Bengaluru — it could be from home or small work stations/co-working spaces, depending on number of employees. P5

Tech Scene

- 12.15L people directly working in various IT/BT and ITeS firms in Bengaluru
- 80,000 people working in IT/BT companies outside Bengaluru, including Mysuru, Mangaluru, Hubballi-Dharwad, Shivamogga, Kalaburgi and Belagavi
- Around 5L jobs estimated outside Bengaluru by 2025

India growth to be the world's fastest, says IMF

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

THE International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Tuesday revised its India's growth rate projection for 2021 to a decent 11.5% from 8.8% it had projected earlier on the back of the country's "stronger than expected recovery".

It also improved its forecast for India's current fiscal to 8% GDP contraction from 10.3% negative growth projected in its October World Economic Outlook report.

According to the IMF, India is the only major economy in the world that can register a double-digit growth in 2021. China is next with 8.1% growth in 2021 followed by Spain (5.9%) and France (5.5%).

The latest projections give India the tag of the fastest developing economy in the world.

The projections are also in line with the Centre's assessment of a strong revival in the coming months, aided by the recent vaccine approvals.

After a stupendous rebound in 2021, the IMF said India's GDP growth is likely to slow in 2022 to 6.8%.

IMF Chief Economist Gita Gopinath said India seems to be having a faster pace of recovery than previously thought. P10

STEEP 35 PAISE HIKE IN PETROL, DIESEL PRICES

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

PETROL price was raised by 35 paise in the national capital on Tuesday, pushing it to an all-time high of ₹86.05 per litre. Likewise, the price of one litre of diesel was increased to ₹76.23 from ₹75.88.

Tuesday's petrol price is the highest ever recorded in Delhi, while diesel price is at a record high in Mumbai. In Mumbai, petrol and diesel prices were ₹92.62 and ₹83.03, respectively, on Tuesday.

It needs to be mentioned that bulk of the fuel price — 67% in case of petrol and 61% for diesel — goes towards taxes, dealer commission and freight charges. The base price remains below ₹30 per litre.